

Committee on Governance Meeting Minutes
Meeting #27 (2017-18)
Thursday, February 22, 2018, 10:00 am – 11:00 am
Faculty Governance Conference Room

In Attendance: Leonard Albano, Bruce Bursten (Provost), Glenn Gaudette (Chair), Mark Richman (Secretary of the Faculty), David Spanagel (Secretary), Bengisu Tulu, and Suzanne Weekes (via telephone).

1. The meeting was called to order at 10:07 am.
2. The agenda was approved as amended.
3. The minutes for COG meeting #26 (Feb. 19, 2018) were reviewed and approved as amended.
4. Prof. Gaudette reported on his meeting with COAP on Feb. 19, 2018. COAP currently has a role in evaluating Department Heads, and the question was raised in that discussion whether program directors should be evaluated alongside department heads. COG members commented that program directors are not all appointed via search committee processes, and they wondered whether program directors, like department heads, are hired for 5-year terms of service, once appointed. COG hopes that COAP and COG can address these issues jointly.

Prof. Gaudette also indicated that COAP was considering introducing procedures for when the Nominator and Advocate should (or should not) be present during discussions about a candidate for promotion.

5. Prof. Richman notified COG that the joint working group of Faculty and Trustees would be coming forward with a draft of a new sexual misconduct policy this spring for consideration by COG and then by the Faculty. The Trustees will actually be putting the working draft in place as an interim policy at the February Board Retreat (Feb. 28 – Mar. 2), with the expectation that the Faculty will review and revise it in time for a vote by the Faculty by the end of the academic year and for a vote by the Board at the May 2018 Trustees meeting.
6. Prof. Richman walked COG through the slides that he has begun to update for the annual TT/NTT credits delivered Faculty Meeting presentation. There was a slight growth in total credit hours delivered from 2015-16 to 2016-17, whereas there was a slight decline in the number of TTT faculty members and a more substantial increase in the number of NTT faculty members in the same period. However, because the number of credits delivered per TTT increased slightly and the number of credits delivered per NTT decreased slightly, the percentages of credits delivered by TTTs and NTTs remained about the same.

Prof. Spanagel shared spreadsheets that he is developing to analyze how many additional TTT faculty members would be required to restore every department's instructional capacities to a balance such that TTT faculty members could realistically deliver a "significant majority" of every department's share of credit hours. While details and assumptions built into his analysis need further discussion, Prof. Spanagel identified four departments where instructional demand has outpaced TTT faculty growth to such an extreme over the past several years that a double-digit shortfall in TTT lines that in his opinion now exists in each of those departments. He cautioned against overstressing TTT faculty in any area of the Institute, since all areas need to function well to support the vitality

of WPI as a whole. Finally, Prof. Spanagel urged COG members to help the Provost frame a more ambitious plan of action – one designed to achieve a significant boost in the numbers of TTT faculty over the next few years.

Prof. Gaudette shared some slides that highlight the combined goals of increasing research productivity while maintaining the instructional commitment of the TTT faculty. In regards to the Strategic Plan's call for a 50% increase in external research funding, he noted that faculty in some WPI departments are more successful than others in bringing in research dollars, and urged that we not lose sight of that dimension as we consider future TTT faculty growth plans. Prof. Weekes cautioned that comparisons of relative research "success" must be calibrated relatively against the differences in funding from one discipline/field to another, so that we do not just base our sense of expectations for what a department's research expenditures should be on what other WPI departments do. She expressed wariness of using numbers without qualitative context, in general.

Prof. Gaudette asked how many TT searches have been conducted in each of the past several years. Provost Bursten informed the committee that the number of new TTTs hired in each of the years from AY 2012-13 to AY 2017-18 were as follows: 19, 13, 13, 15, 17, and 17. Due to attrition, this pattern of hiring yielded a net increase of about 7 percent in the number of TTT faculty members over those six years.

Provost Bursten asked COG to examine whether all the current TT faculty members are contributing at full instructional capacity, and what can be done to address that side of the equation as COG tries to model how many more TT are needed to restore the number of TT/NTT credits delivered to the desired balance. Time did not allow for further discussion of this proposal.

7. The meeting adjourned at 11:12 am.

Respectfully submitted,

David Spanagel, Secretary